

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Claims 12-33 are requested to be cancelled.

Claims 1-6 are currently being amended.

Claims 34-60 are being added.

After amending the claims as set forth above, Claims 1-11 and 34-60 are now pending in this application, of which Claims 1, 50, 53, 55, and 59 are independent.

IDS

An IDS is being prepared to provide copies of references recently brought to Applicants' attention. The IDS will be mailed shortly after the filing of this communication. Applicants respectfully request that the examiner consider the IDS before proceeding with the next action.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

On page 2 of the Office Action, Claim 33 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. Claim 33 has been cancelled.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

A. Rejection as Anticipated by Huang et al.

On page 2 of the Office Action, Claims 1-5, 10, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by US Pat. No. 6,352, 758 to Huang et al. Claim 1, as amended, recites "a flexible composite comprising... a multiplicity of ribs raised above the

first face of the reinforcement material and a multiplicity of ribs raised above the second face of the reinforcement material.” Huang et al. does not teach a multiplicity of ribs raised above two different faces of a reinforcement material. Rather, Huang et al. teaches forming an article having “alternating hydrophobic and hydrophilic surface regions.” Col. 4, lines 19-28. See also, Col. 4, lines 36-48. The purpose of these alternating surface regions is to provide an anti-dew and/or anti-frost surface, particularly for the message carrying area of a traffic sign. Col. 1, lines 11-16; and Col. 3, lines 25-29. Huang et al. does not teach or suggest that this anti-dew coating should be applied in a manner that would meet the above-mentioned limitation of Claim 1. Thus, Huang et al. does not anticipate Claim 1, as amended. Claims 2-5, 10, and 11 depend from Claim 1 and would be allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1.

B. Rejection as Anticipated by Paine

On page 3 of the Office Action, Claims 1, 10, and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by US Pat. No. 1,580,075 to Paine. Claim 1, as amended, recites “a flexible composite comprising... a multiplicity of ribs raised above the first face of the reinforcement material and a multiplicity of ribs raised above the second face of the reinforcement material.” Paine does not teach a multiplicity of ribs raised above two different faces of a reinforcement material. Rather, Paine is directed to an improved tread surface of an automobile running board with corrugations 3 raised above a single surface of a sheet 2 of rubber. Page 1, lines 12-16 and 44-56. Paine does not teach or suggest that this improved running board tread should be applied in a manner that would meet the above-mentioned limitation of Claim 1. Thus, Paine does not anticipate Claim 1, as amended. Claims 10 and 11 depend from Claim 1 and would be allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1.

C. Rejection as Anticipated by Hokae

On page 3 of the Office Action, Claims 1-4, 7, 10, 11, 29, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by US Pat. No. 4,899,872 to Hokao. Claim 1, as amended,

recites “a flexible composite comprising... a multiplicity of ribs raised above the first face of the reinforcement material and a multiplicity of ribs raised above the second face of the reinforcement material.” Hokao does not teach a multiplicity of ribs raised above two different faces of a reinforcement material. Rather, Hokao teaches that a guide member 4 is fixed to a belt body 1 on the back of the belt body to prevent weaving of the belt. Col. 2, lines 4-6 and Col. 3, lines 65-66. Hokao does not teach or suggest that this anti-weaving belt includes a multiplicity of ribs disposed over two faces as recited in Claim 1. Thus, Hokao does not anticipate Claim 1, as amended. Claims 2-4, 7, 10, and 11 depend from Claim 1 and would be allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1. Claims 29 and 31 have been cancelled.

D. Rejection as Anticipated by GB 1,279,581

On page 4 of the Office Action, Claims 1, 4, 5, 10, 11, 29, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by GB 1,279,581. Claim 1, as amended, recites “a flexible composite comprising... a multiplicity of ribs raised above the first face of the reinforcement material and a multiplicity of ribs raised above the second face of the reinforcement material.” GB 1,279,581 does not teach a multiplicity of ribs raised above two different faces of a reinforcement material. Rather, GB 1,279,581 teaches that a fixed parallel bands 2 disposed on a single surface of a support 1. Page 2, lines 36-39. GB 1,279,581 does not teach or suggest that this slideway includes a multiplicity of ribs disposed over two faces as recited in Claim 1. Thus, GB 1,279,581 does not anticipate Claim 1, as amended. Claims 4, 5, 10, and 11 depend from Claim 1 and would be allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1. Claims 29 and 31 have been cancelled.

E. Rejection as Anticipated by McKelvy

On page 4 of the Office Action, Claims 1, 10, 11, 29, 30, and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by US Pat. No. 3,222,237 to McKelvy. Claim 1, as

amended, recites “wherein the ribs raised above the first face are raised above the first face by about 0.02 inches to about 0.05 inches.” McKelvy does not teach ribs raised above a face of the reinforcement material by about 0.02 inches to about 0.05 inches. Rather, McKelvy teaches that natural ridges can be formed in a material when a reinforcing material is arranged as a mesh. The total height of the ridges on both sides of the composite of McKelvy are governed by the thickness of the glass fibers of the reinforcing material. The only example offered by McKelvy showed a thickness of the fiberglass of 5.5 mils (0.0055 inches), which would not result in a rib being raised above a first face of a reinforcement material by more than about 0.02 inches as recited in Claim 1. Thus, McKelvy does not anticipate Claim 1, as amended. Claims 10 and 11 depend from Claim 1 and would be allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1. Claims 29-31 have been cancelled.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

On pages 4-5 of the Office Action, Claims 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 30, and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over GB 1,279,581. As discussed above with respect to anticipation based on GB 1,279,581 (section D), this reference fails to teach “a flexible composite comprising... a multiplicity of ribs raised above the first face of the reinforcement material and a multiplicity of ribs raised above the second face of the reinforcement material” as recited in Claim 1 (as amended). Further, there is no teaching or suggestion in GB 1,279,581 to include a multiplicity of ribs raised above the first face of the reinforcement material and a multiplicity of ribs raised above the second face of the reinforcement material. Rather, GB 1,279,581 is directed to providing a single surface for sliding articles such as baggage and people.

Amendment to Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended. The amendments to Claim 1 are supported by the specification at Fig. 3 and its description on page 19, by reference to Example 3 on pages 22-23, and also by reference to Example 2.

New Claims

Claims 34-60 are being added. Claims 34-60 are supported by the specification as originally filed. Specifically, Claims 34-47, 50, 52, 53, 55, 57, 59, and 60 are supported by reference to Fig. 3 and its description on page 19, by reference to Example 3 on pages 22-23, and also by reference to Example 2 and particularly the description of Example 2 on page 22. Claims 35, 50, 53, 54, 55, and 57 are further supported at page 20, lines 4-5.

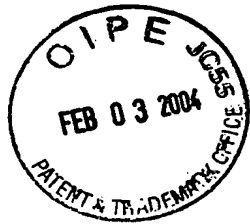
Further, Claims 35, 52, 54, and 57 find support at page 7, lines 15-16. Claims 34, 36, 49, 53, and 56 are further supported at page 7, lines 3-6. Claims 37, 38, 51, and 58 are further supported page 8, lines 12-15; page 11, lines 2-3 and 19-22; and at page 12, lines 8-9.

A. Claims 34-49

Claims 34-49 depend from Claim 1 and would be allowable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1.

B. Claims 50-60

Claims 50, 53, 55, and 59 recite elements similar to Claim 1 and are also believed to be allowable over the cited references. With respect to Claim 59, the examiner is encouraged to review the first paragraph of page 23 of the application.



Conclusion

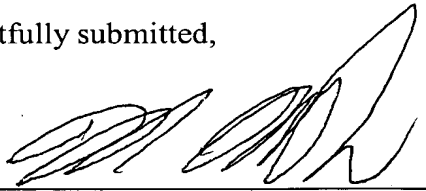
Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested. The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that the present claims are not in condition for allowance.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1447. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

Respectfully submitted,

Date Feb. 3, 2004

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